

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for reviewing the present application.

Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 18-21.

Amendments to the Specification

Applicant has taken this opportunity to correct several typographical errors in the specification. No new subject matter is added by way of these amendments.

Amendments to the Claims

Independent claims 1, 9 and 15 are amended for clarity to therefore place the respective claims in a better position for allowance.

Claims 5 and 11 are amended correcting the language used therein.

Claim 18 is amended removing an unnecessary comma in step (b), changing the term "dispense" to "distribute" in step (b), and changing the term "medium" to "material" in step (e). Applicant advises that these changes have been made for consistency with the language used in the other claims.

No new subject matter is added by way of these amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. publication 2004/0149431 to Wylie et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as follows.

As noted above, claims 1 and 9 are amended for clarity. Each claim requires, in part, a spreader assembly affixed to a reamer head for distributing liner material, and a material supply connected to the spreader assembly.

Wylie teaches a method and apparatus for well bore drilling that includes a raise bore drilling operation using a reamer head, following the creation of a bore hole, as shown in Figure 9B. However, Wylie does not teach either a spreader assembly, or a material supply connected to the spreader assembly, in fact Wylie is entirely silent regarding such features.

The Examiner equates numeral 52 in Wylie to the spreader assembly recited in claim 1.

However, as indicated in paragraph 275 of Wylie, numeral 52 in fact refers to a set of arms that have rotary cutters 54 attached thereto. The arms 52 serve to encourage the cutters 54 towards the bore wall, and Wylie does not contemplate using such arms to supply lining material. In fact, such an arrangement would detrimentally affect the operation of the cutters 54, since lining material would only serve to interfere with the cutting operation. Therefore, for at least that reason, Wylie cannot anticipate claims 1 and 9.

Moreover, the Examiner equates paragraph 276 of Wylie to the material supply recited in claims 1 and 9. Paragraph 276 describes that a chemical casing can be applied to the bore wall once the reaming operation has completed. However, this paragraph is silent as to supplying such casing to the wall during operation of the reamer head as recited in the claims, let alone such a supply being connected to the spreader assembly to facilitate the supply of such material. Wylie simply does not show such a feature. Therefore, for this additional reason, Wylie clearly cannot anticipate claims 1 and 9.

Claims 2-8 and 10-14 being ultimately dependent on claims 1 and 9 respectively, are also believed to distinguish over Wylie.

Claims 15 -17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 3,664,441 to Carey. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as follows.

As noted above, claim 15 has been amended for clarity. Claim 15 requires, in part, liner having a plurality of concentric walls defining a series of fluid passageways between successive ones of the walls to convey fluid axially within the rod.

Carey teaches a drill rod composed of a pair of concentric tubes that enable oil to travel through a drill string to a derrick (see Figure 3). Therefore, at best, Carey teaches the outer casing recited in claim 15, however does not teach a liner as recited in claim 15. Claim 15 requires a plurality of concentric walls that define a series of fluid passageways. The multiple passageways enable dissimilar fluids to travel within the drill rod without mixing (see paragraph [0032] on page 6 of the subject application). Carey simply shows two isolated passageways that would enable, for example, bi-directional flow of oil in a single drill rod. Carey does not show a plurality of passageways within a liner as recited in claim 15, but is entirely silent in that regard. Therefore, Carey cannot anticipate claim 15.

Claims 16-17 being ultimately dependent on claim 15 are also believed to distinguish over Carey.

Appl. No. 10/766,199

Page 8

Reply to Office Action of: August 17, 2005

Summary

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-21 clearly and patentably distinguish over the prior art cited by the Examiner, and as such are in condition for allowance.

Applicant requests early reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

John R.S. Orange
Agent for Applicant
Registration No. 29,725

Date: December 14, 2005

BLAKE, CASSELS & GRAYDON LLP
Suite 2800, P.O. Box 25
199 Bay Street, Commerce Court West
Toronto, Ontario M5L 1A9
CANADA

Tel: 416.863.3164
JRO/BSL